Volume 1, Issue 4

September 1, 2003

# Kennel Quarterly



Animal Services shelter in spring

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Rochester Police Department Animal Services Unit

#### **Year End Statistics**

The adoption rate continues to increase with each passing year. During Fiscal Year 2002-2003, the Animal Services Unit (ASU) impounded 6,367 animals. That is similar (4% less) to last year's total of 6,619. Of those animals impounded this year, 1,292 (20.3%) were adopted out into new homes. Last year's adoption numbers (1,075) and percentages (16.2%) were lower. That means that not only are more animals being adopted out, but those adoptions come from a smaller population of impounded animals.

Most of the decline in impound numbers is attributed to a decline in the number of dogs seized by or surrendered to Animal Services. This year, ASU impounded 3,232 dogs compared to 3,674 last year. Of those dogs impounded, ASU adopted out 739 (22.9%), transferred 101 (3.1%), owners reclaimed 810 (25.1%), and 1,513 (46.8%) were humanely

euthanized. Last year's dispositions for dogs were as follows: 651 (17.7%) adoptions, 234 (6.3%) transfers, 1,014 (27.6%) redemptions, and 1,709 (46.5%) euthanasia. So despite the increases in adoption rates and the reduced seizure rate for dogs, the euthanasia rate remained unchanged. The increases in adoptions have offset the decreased number of animals transferred to Lollypop Farm and other animal welfare organizations.

The situation with cats was much the same except for the impound numbers. During this fiscal year, we impounded 2,911 cats. That represents an increase of nearly 200 cats (7.2%) from both previous fiscal years (2,716 and 2,715 cats in 2000-2001 and 2001-2002, respectively). Of those cats impounded this year, 465 (16%) were adopted, 277 (9.5%) were transferred, 43 (1.5%) were reclaimed by own-

ers, and 1,960 (67.3%) were humanely euthanized. Last year, 379 (14%) were adopted, 356 (13.1%) were transferred, 53 (2%) were reclaimed, and 1,829 (67.3%) were humanely euthanized.

The statistics for cats are disturbing for a few reasons. First, the marked increase in the number of cats impounded illustrates that the overpopulation of cats is a growing problem, whereas stray dog populations may be on the decline. Second, the meager number of cats reclaimed by owners suggest how disposable these animals have become in our community. As with the dogs, the euthanasia rate for cats remained constant despite the increased cat adoption num-

During this next year, the ASU will commit itself to continuing to improve its adoption program and to increasing public outreach on responsible pet ownership.

# **Spring Training for Animal Services Personnel**

May 20-21, Assistant Supervisor Tim Wensel and ACO Andrew Ames attended Chemical Immobilization of Animals at SUNY Delhi. Wensel and Ames returned to Rochester with a wealth of information regarding chemical restraint and a newfound respect for its complexity. Chemical restraint is an inexact science. Not only do different species respond differently, but particular individuals may also respond differently to chemical injections. The capture and

handling can be very traumatic for the target animals and dangerous for wildlife agents and animal control personnel. Wild animals undergo a variety of physiological responses to capture and often times die after transport and release at "more appropriate" locations. Sometimes the darting procedure stimulates the animal to flee thereby putting itself and the humans nearby at risk for injury. Animals frequently die from cardiac arrest or heat ex-

haustion following capture attempts. At other times, animals that are successfully released may be attacked, harassed, and even killed by their conspecifics in their new location. The relocated animal may be forced out of the area or die there due to lack of food and other habitat components. For these reasons and because NYS DEC has authority over wildlife, Animal Services will use chemical restraint only under extreme circumstances. (see **Training** Page 3)

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#### **Rochester Animal Services Statistics**



Rochester Animal Services temporarily houses approximately 6,500 animals annually. We are committed to reuniting owners with missing pets and to placing animals in new homes, however it is impossible to find homes for all of them. Some animals are euthanized due to illness or injury. Others may display vicious or aggressive temperaments. Currently, the City of Rochester does not authorize the adoption of "pit bulls" from the shelter, so those that are not reclaimed are euthanized or transferred to Lollypop Farm. Sadly, many animals are euthanized because there are just far too many stray and unwanted animals in our community and we do not have space to house them all. We must all take responsibility to spay and neuter our pets and to encourage others to do the same. If the number of animals coming in declines, then we can devote more time and energy to those animals we do shelter, we can increase adoptions and redemptions and decrease euthanasia.

"We must all take responsibility to spay and neuter our pets and to encourage others to do the same."

# **Teaming With Rhinos To Increase Awareness**



ACT Lalka at Frontier Field with adoptable animals and information kiosk.

File photo

Last year we attended several Rochester Red Wings baseball games and set up an information booth to promote our programs and services. This year, we have coordinated similar information kiosks at several Rochester Raging Rhinos soccer games. At select home games a few employees and volunteers set up a table with our banner and poster board advertising our unit and displaying examples of adoptable animals. They also distribute brochures describing our programs and services, Animal Services refrigerator magnets, and ani-

mal stickers. The main attraction is typically the charismatic canines or frisky felines chosen to serve as representatives of the types of animals available for adoption at the shelter.

As with the Red Wings games last year, we are still amazed with the number of individuals visiting Frontier Field who have no knowledge of Animal Services or the location of the shelter just one block North of the field.

Each event is an opportunity to promote adoptions, recruit volunteers, and simply make soccer enthusiasts aware of our location and our various services and programs. We look forward to continuing this relationship with the Raging Rhinos and Frontier Field next season. We also hope to establish similar arrangements with the Amerks, the Knighhawks, and the Rattlers. Thanks Rhinos and Frontier Field!

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#### From the Director's Chair

Things were busy during the fourth quarter as evidenced by the tardiness of this issue. Spring and summer always mark the busy times of year at Animal Services for a variety of reasons, not the least of which is the nicer weather. Both our human and non-human clientele are more active during the warmer months. The more active we all are, the more likely we are to come in contact and even conflict with each other. So people are more likely to see animals and thereby more likely to observe nuisances or public safety concerns. Thus, we get more calls for service. Also, there are more animals abound in the spring and summer with many species producing litters during those months. That translates into an overabundance of unwanted puppies and kittens coming into the shelter. Factor in the personnel shortages, and we had our work cut out for us. But our staff has risen to the challenge by working long shifts, coming in on days off, and accepting greater workloads.

There were also a couple of less routine incidents during this fourth quarter. Particularly noteworthy, were the dog fight-

ing and stolen dog investigations (page 4) with which we assisted.

Beyond the usual increases in calls for service and animal activity, the warm months also mark our busy time for outreach events. This spring we began attending select Rhinos soccer games to promote our services and programs. Most of our dog bite prevention presentations also occur during the spring, whether for school groups, utility workers, or other organizations.

Additionally, we sent several employees out of town for professional training in animal care and control procedures. Unfortunately there are few training programs offered in our area for animal care and control personnel. Therefore, we must seek out such training programs in other locations. Due to limited budgets, out of town training is often cost-prohibitive, but this year I made an extra effort to locate funds and give several employees opportunities to enhance their knowledge of this field.

These recent trips demonstrate my commitment to our unit and to the professional development of the individual

employees. I continue to strive to make our unit an exemplary animal care and control organization that other municipalities will strive to emulate.

Many people still view animal control as the "pound" and the dog catchers often portrayed in cartoons, but Animal Services has grown and evolved into an integral part of the Rochester Police Department. We help maintain public safety, educate our community, reunite owners with missing pets, and each year we enable hundreds of animals to have a second chance in a new home. We help people and we help animals. This is an honorable profession.

As always I welcome your comments regarding our programs, services, and procedures and any thoughts about this or any past or future issues.

Chris Fitzgerald



# **Training (from Page 1)**

May 27-30, ACOs Tabitha
Herscha, Edwin Santiago, Matt
Leach, Jeff Leusch, and Reggie
Reed attended the Animal Control Officers and Shelter Personnel Academy also at SUNY
Delhi. Those ACOs reviewed
New York State laws regarding
dog and animal control, dog
licensing, animal cruelty, and
rabies control.

May 29-31, Supervisors Tom Shannon and Dan Murphy attended the National Animal Control Association's annual conference in St. Louis Missouri. Both supervisors returned with a revitalized enthusiasm and commitment to the job and the pride in recognizing what an excellent job Animal Services is doing here in Rochester. This was also a great networking opportunity as the conference attracts animal control personnel from throughout the nation.

The American Humane Association's Shelter Operations School was postponed until September and ASU is still planning to send two employees to that program in Pittsburgh, PA.

Animal Services is also considering the possibility of developing a training program focused on urban animal control. According to one ACO, "We do what we do very well..." and we want to share our expertise with our counterparts throughout the region and beyond. Discussions are ongoing.



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Blood-soaked fighting pit (top), breaking sticks (bottom), and two injured dogs from organized dog fight at 411 Mt Read Blvd (right).

# **Animal Control Officers Assist With Dog Fighting Bust**

On May 10, 2003, Animal Control Officers Jeff Leusch and Reggie Reed responded along with Maple Section Police Officers and Humane Society Cruelty Investigator Ron Storm to 411 Mt. Read Boulevard for a dog fight in progress. The Humane Society had been investigating the suspects for several weeks. According to Investigator Storm, they made 13 arrests and seized over \$6,000 in cash from the location.

Animal Control Officers removed two pit bulls, both with severe fighting injuries, and transported them to Lollypop Farm for treatment. They found the blood soaked fighting "pit" in the basement along with buckets of bloody water and

breaking sticks used for prying open a dog's bite on another dog.

On May 11, Animal Services removed a stray pit bull with scars from behind the garage at 25 Garland Street immediately adjacent to 411 Mt. Read Blvd. The scars were consistent with those attributed to dog fighting, therefore Animal Services believes this dog was likely connected with the suspects. Also on May 11, ACOs assisted Cruelty Investigators with the removal and transport of several dogs from a location on Newcomb Street to Lollypop Farm. Again, there is believed to be a connection to the Mt. Read fight.

Then on May 13, ACOs were

contacted by Clinton Section Officers to remove three pit bulls from a location on Wilkins Street. Charges are pending on these follow-up seizures.





### **Animal Services Helps Return Stolen Dogs to Owner**

On May 23, 2003, ten dogs were stolen from Darlene and Jason Hoover, breeders in Junius, New York. The stolen dogs included two adult English bulldogs, four English bulldog puppies, and four pug puppies. State Police notified surrounding authorities including the RPD. A friend of the Hoovers cleverly placed an ad in the classifieds stating that she was looking for a female bulldog to breed. When contacted by the suspects, the friend gave their contact information to the Central Investigations Division. Sgt. DeBellis verified that the suspect's vehicle was at 108 Weld Street. Subsequently, Lt. Van-Son observed an adult bulldog on the porch at that location. Captain Johnston was able to obtain a warrant based on those observations and on June 18, Animal Control assisted with the removal of two bulldogs from the property.

Both adult bulldogs were recovered, transported to the animal shelter, and finally reunited with Darlene and Jason Hoover on June 20, 2003. Shortly after the reunion, the female bulldog gave birth to another litter of five puppies.

Although only two dogs were recovered from 108 Weld Street, the investigation is ongoing and one of the pugs turned up on a subsequent drug raid at a different location in early July. There will be more on that pug investigation in the next issue.

This represents an example of effective cooperative Police work between State and local authorities that we should all be proud of and take comfort in. Great job to all involved!



NYS Dog License tag

# **More Tips For Our Local Pet Guardians**

- L. License your dogs. New York State requires all dogs over 4 months of age be licensed. Dogs can be licensed through the City Clerk's Office or your local town clerk, for non-City residents.
- Use a leash when walking your dog. This will not only prevent you from receiving a citation, but it will also prevent your dog from running into traffic and reduce the likelihood of your dog injuring another person.
- Keep your cats indoors!
   Outdoor cats face a host of hazards from encounters with other animals, to ingesting pesticides and antifreeze, to collisions with vehicles. They are much safer indoors.

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#### Who's Who At Animal Services?

Matt Leach was born in Rochester. He attended Brockport High School and was a member of the wrestling team. After high school, Matt attended Genesee Community College for two semesters, Edinboro Univeersity for one semester, Morrisville College for one semester, and then took classes in Fine Art at SUNY Brockport. Matt holds a NYS Coaching Certificate and prior to being hired by the RPD, he was working as the wrestling coach for Brockport High School. Matt was hired by Animal Services as an Animal Control Officer when the RPD assumed control of the unit in June 2000. Matt enjoys working out, boxing, wrestling, and riding his Harley.

Elaine Lalka was born in Rochester and attended St. Agnes High School. After graduating, Elaine continued her education at M.C.C. earning an A.A.S. in Liberal Arts. Then she

attended SUNY Cortland where she received a B.S. in Education. Elaine was a Physical Education teacher for a few years before moving to Florida where she worked for Walt Disney World in a variety of capacities including Life Guard and Pool Chemist. Elaine returned to Rochester in 1998 and worked as a Charter Specialist for a local catering business. Prior to joining Animal Services, Elaine worked for Boise Cascade Office Products. Elaine was hired in May 2002 as an Animal Care Technician.

Bruce Kendrick was born in Rochester and attended Monroe High School. In 1999 Bruce was hired by the Humane Society to work as a Kennel Attendant at Rochester Animal Services. He was hired by the Rochester Police Department as an Animal Care Technician in June 2000 when the RPD assumed operational control of the unit. In fall 2002, Bruce

was promoted to Animal Control Officer. He enjoys working with people from diverse backgrounds and experiences. Bruce is the father of an eight year old daughter named Kitana. He enjoys spending time with his daughter and listening to Latin music.







ACO Leach (top), ACT Lalka (middle), and ACO Kendrick (bottom)

# Top 10 Reasons Why Upper Respiratory Infection Is (STILL) Such A Problem

- 10. Cats come into the shelter sick.
- 9. Cats come into the shelter appearing healthy but are actually incubating disease.
- 8. Some incoming cats are malnourished.
- 7. Some cats are heavily infested with parasites.
- Some cats have other disease processes going on such as FeLV or FIV.
- 5. Overcrowding
- Stress
- 3. Cats not vaccinated and processed upon arrival.
- 2. Cages, litter boxes, etc. not cleaned and disinfected thoroughly
- YOU! Hands not being washed between cats, clothes carrying germs between cats, too much well-intentioned but detrimental handling, petting, and playing with cats.

Submitted by Andrew Newmark, D.V.M.



# Rochester Police Department **Animal Services Unit**

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Get personal. Adopt a pet.

Animal Services is a municipal animal care and control unit within the Rochester Police Department that is committed to improving quality of life and safety for city residents, the promotion of responsible pet guardianship, and the reduction of animal overpopulation to reduce animal suffering and euthanasia. Animal Services enforces all New York State and City of Rochester ordinances pertaining to animal control. We operate an animal shelter for stray, injured, menacing, and disowned animals. The shelter serves as a resource for locating lost pets and as an adoption center. We strive to provide the best possible care for all animals in our charge.

#### VISIT US ONLINE

#### WWW.ROCHESTERANIMALSERVICES.COM

#### **Volunteer Corner**

During this quarter, Yolanda Sayres, Assistant Shelter Manager, began preparing Orlando Santos, Animal Care Technician, to take over as our Unit's volunteer coordinator. Yolanda will be away for maternity leave during the fall, so Orlando began shadowing her this spring and will assume responsibility of coordinating and training our volunteers during the summer and fall months. Please extend your best wishes to Yolanda as she approaches her September 24 due date.

The volunteers have been doing an excellent job making sure that the animals get exercised, socialized, groomed, and showered with affection. However, beyond these fun respon-

sibilities, many volunteers have also provided invaluable assistance with cleaning, laundry, and other ACT duties during a critical period. The warm months mark the busy season for the our Unit and the extra workload coupled with personnel shortages made volunteer help vital to our daily operations. Thanks for all of the dedication and hard work.

Animal Services would like to recognize the Fischer family for their outstanding commitment to helping our Unit and the animals we care for. Kathy, Nicole, and Sarah are regular volunteers at the shelter. They also lend a hand at promotional events such as the Rhinos games Animal Services at-

tended this quarter. The Fischers have also become a foster home for our puppies and kittens that are too young to board at the shelter and require round-the-clock attention. Finally, the Fischers have promoted Animal Services with their friends and acquaintences, they have advocated on our behalf, and they have generated support for our programs and our goals. Thank you Kathy, Nicole, and Sarah for all that you do for Animal Services.



Volunteer Chris Stevens spending some time in the park with "Shy."